AMENDMENTS

Please amend the application as follows:

In the Specification:

Please amend paragraph [0039] as follows:

In addition to the aforedescribed interleaving, the FEC module 25 also preferably interleaves the code words 29 across multiple lines 35 and 36. In this regard, the FEC module 25 ensures that at least a portion of each code word 29 is transmitted over primary line 35 and that another portion of the same code word 29 is transmitted over backup line 36. Such interleaving further helps to enhance the ability of the receiving system 17 to recover characters corrupted by impulse noise on the communication lines 35 and 36. Techniques for performing the foregoing interleaving are described in more detail in commonly-assigned U.S. Patent Application (attorney docket no. 710101-1170) No. 10/667,942, entitled "System and Method for Interleaving Forward Error Correction Code Words Across Multiple Communication Connections," and filed concurrently herewith, which is incorporated herein by reference.